

# CULTIVATE MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER...April...2010

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## Greetings in Jesus!

So here we are in April. Finally! I say finally because of the long harsh Winters here in the high country of Colorado. Yes, it's beautiful with its virgin snows and now the beginning of Spring but I sure am glad to see Winter once again depart.

I do want to say Thank You to those who help keep this ministry going through your prayers and gifts of support. Couldn't do it without you!

## Obama Care Passed...Oh Oh!

Welcome to another quantum leap toward Communism! They had pull some tricks to pull it off but it's now passed. So, what does this mean? This will speed up the coming financial collapse. That's the bad news. The good news? They're not going to start charging fines for not buying health insurance until 2014. Two years after the New World Order boys' plans for nuking America and blaming it on the predicted 2012 flares from the Sun, so we may never be forced to buy health care at all! What a time to be here!

## The Gospel According to Avatar...

*There is once again a cult following of yet another major film. I expect there's to be more of these coming out as sequels and as usual, Christians are likely to be seduced therein so I thought you should get the picture of things in light of Scripture and discernment. The following article is by T.A. McMahon who works with my friend Dave Hunt of the Berean Call.*

Movies are today's most popular means of influencing cultures on a worldwide scale. They have been effective in that way for the greater part of a century. They are, and always have been, teaching machines.

Although most people regard them as simply escapist fare or a mode of entertainment, they nevertheless always teach something. That fact became shockingly clear to me in my pre-Christian days when I was in Iran as a screenwriter on a Hollywood production. The time was just prior to the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. The revolution was literally ignited by Muslim clerics who had ordered their followers to set fire to movie theaters (packed with audiences). It was a protest against the teaching and influence of Western culture contained in the films, particularly the immorality and degenerate conduct displayed. With obviously less drastic reactions and consequences, no place seems to be out of the reach of the influence of movies no matter where one travels these days.

That is certainly true of one of the most expensive films to date, the quarter-of-a-billion-dollar production of *Avatar*, which has already grossed 2 billion dollars. No film thus far has matched its stunning production value in creating a fantastic world of computer-generated characters that seamlessly match and interact with the physical actors and the world we know. Believability is the "do or die" quality of every movie of any kind, and *Avatar* makes believers of all but the most critical film goers--few of whom could complain that this extraordinary production did not give them their money's worth.

My objective in writing this article is not to complain about the movie production (I paid the matinee, senior-citizen price, so I hardly felt cheated) but rather to give my view of the theology communicated in *Avatar*. We at TBC have received questions from concerned parents who aren't sure the film would be appropriate for their young teens to see and want to know how to discuss the movie's content with them. *Avatar's* theology is my primary concern.

First of all, it shouldn't be surprising that the beliefs of most people are not derived from Sunday school or church teaching but rather religious ideas they pick up from a wide variety of sources as they go through life. Prior to being born again and becoming a biblical Christian, for example, I had received a great deal of religious instruction, growing up Catholic, to which I added all kinds of contrary spiritual ideas, from reincarnation to the denial of hell to the universal salvation of everyone. I've had conversations with those who claim to hold the Bible as their only source of faith and practice yet who also hold ideas they have gleaned from Oprah Winfrey or some of her New Age guests. Humanity in general seems to be a magnet for all kinds of beliefs about God, and this would include not only the very religious but the agnostic and the atheist as well.

Movies often teach theology. Some have greatly influenced our last two generations about the character and qualities of God and perhaps none more than the *Star Wars* series, which began in the late 1970s. This series promoted the supreme deity as an impersonal, amoral energy "Force" that could be tapped into and used for one's own end through mental techniques. "May the Force be with you" was even interpreted by some sincere (but sincerely wrong!) Christians as Jesus being the true "Force." Such a promotion attributes characteristics to Jesus that both distort and demean His character as presented in the Scriptures--resulting in "another Jesus." *Star Wars* wrapped the beliefs and practices of Hinduism in a high-tech, science fiction saga. Obi Wan was a sorcerer; Yoda was a yogi by design and practice, and the incredibly successful film series propelled Eastern mysticism into the minds of Western youth. *Avatar* does the same for shamanism.

Shamanism is the religion of nature and spirits and is the most widespread of all the religions in the world. It's found among every indigenous people group throughout the earth, and its beliefs and techniques are the same wherever it is found. This is due to the fact that shamanism is a practice that comes from the spirit realm, with the spirits themselves not restricted by distant geographical locations. The term *shaman* comes from the Tungus people of Siberia and has been preferred by anthropologists over "witch doctor," "medicine man," "wizard," "sorcerer," etc. According to noted authority Michael Harner, an anthropologist and shaman, "a shaman enters an altered state of consciousness at will to acquire knowledge, power, and to help other persons. The shaman has at least one, and usually more, 'spirits' in his personal service. To perform his work, the shaman depends on special, personal power, which is usually supplied by his guardian and helping spirits."

*Avatar* is a spectacular platform for preaching shamanism. The story line is neither unique nor complicated. A distant moon planet called Pandora is colonized by a corporation that is mining a metal of great value for the earth, which has been ravaged by the exploitation of its own natural resources. The enterprise, however, is hampered by a tribe of indigenous

humanoids called *Na'vi*, whose village and land cover the main core of the precious metal. Diplomatic attempts to persuade the Na'vi to resettle elsewhere have ended in failure, primarily because of the Na'vi's religion of shamanism. They worship Eywa, a goddess akin to what the Greeks called Gaia, or Mother Earth. Eywa appears to be an impersonal, godlike force that is responsible for maintaining the balance of all life. Everything in Pandora is linked to Eywa mystically and biologically. The biological emphasis amplifies the critical nature of preserving the planet's physical ecological system for future survival. Demonstrating the connectedness of all life forms, the spirits of animals that are killed for food or in self-defense are addressed by the Na'vi either in thanksgiving or apologetically.

Nothing of the sort is found among the humans. The mining enterprise is protected by mercenary soldiers who are gearing up to remove the Na'vi should they ultimately refuse to vacate their land.

The hero of the movie is a paraplegic former marine (Jake Sully) who learns the way of the Na'vi by utilizing a Na'vi-human hybrid body, a creation of incredibly advanced biotechnology. It is called an *avatar*. Jake, in his avatar body, is accepted by the Na'vi because of initial signs that he is favored for some purpose by Eywa and the spirits.

Director and writer James Cameron makes his theological (and ecological) bent quite clear in nearly every frame of the film. The movie's title and image of the Na'vi are derived from the Hindu god Krishna, a blue-skinned incarnated avatar of the god Vishnu. Hinduism teaches that throughout history avatars have manifested in human and/or animal forms to restore the balance of good and evil. The emphasis on trees in the movie is consistent in all shamanism. The huge Hometree that housed the Na'vi clan and is destroyed in the attack by the humans is representative of Eywa providing for the Na'vi through "Mother" nature. The luminescent Tree of Souls, which provides direct communication with Eywa, is also a power center that can transfer souls to other bodies. In traditional shamanism, the tree is a universal communication medium for such cultures to connect with deceased shamans, ancestors, and the spirits themselves.

Cameron has added his own twist to native shamanism by having the Na'vi communicate with the Eywa, spirits, and animals through fiber optics in their braided hair tails. The Na'vi plug the strands into similarly compatible devices found in animals and plants. Although at odds with the actual practice of shamanism, this does reflect the necessity of "experiencing" a god that cannot be "known" through reason, intellect, or science. It also solves a problem for Cameron the filmmaker. In what was no doubt a box office-related decision, he avoids the method commonly used by shamans to contact the spirits: inhaling or imbibing hallucinogenic drugs. Na'vi "doing drugs" would have forced *Avatar* out of a PG-13 rating, eliminating an age group that is prone to seeing such a movie many, many times, as well as being a top consumer of *Avatar*-related merchandise.

In true shamanism, there is no physical "plugging into" or direct biological connection to the spirits. The spirits are nonphysical entities. Other than the drugs that are taken to produce an altered state of consciousness, connecting with the spirits is a mental process. Yet Cameron's deviation from true shamanism ultimately leads to the belief in Eywa. Dr. Grace Augustine, the female scientist in the movie, declares that all of the so-called spiritual phenomena she has observed on Pandora can be explained biologically. In the end, however, Dr. Grace

undergoes a conversion. As she lies dying beneath the Tree of Souls, her final words are those of a materialist who allows her "experience" to override her "science" as she declares her belief in the panentheist goddess of the Na'vi: "Eywa--I see her. She's real!" Grace became what C. S. Lewis described as the ideal work of Satan--a "materialist magician." She submitted to a "Force" god without acknowledging the reality of personal spirits behind such an entity, i.e. demons. Jake, on the other hand, although he initially disdained what he called the "tree-hugging" stuff of the Na'vi, fully commits himself to their "natural" way of life and their mother goddess Eywa.

After reading dozens and dozens of comments by young people enamored with the theology in *Avatar*, it is apparent that its false gospel is finding fertile soil worldwide as it introduces and attracts millions of moviegoers to shamanism.

James Cameron has presented what the Bible calls the "doctrine of devils" promoted by Satan, the father of lies, and taught directly by demons. Cameron's pagan beliefs are diametrically opposed to what the Bible teaches. Furthermore, his idealistic view of the natural purity of an indigenous tribe such as the Na'vi is pure propaganda (see my interview with a former Yanamamo shaman in TBC 11/03). The belief that naturalism produces a life of harmony, fruitfulness, and peace is a lie taught by many anthropologists yet contradicted by the experience of every shamanic society wherever they may be found. How can I be so sure? All indigenous groups are made up of people, who, like all people everywhere, are sinners. This innate evil, moreover, is compounded by seducing spirits bent on deceiving and destroying the humans who find themselves in bondage to them. No anthropologist has ever produced a tribe that was an exception to this destructive condition.

Cameron is certainly entitled to preach the shamanic gospel of *Avatar*. Christians, however, need to be aware of what they are being fed along with the overpriced popcorn. It is a general lack of discernment among them that is often maddening and spiritually treacherous for the upcoming generation of believers. The maddening part comes when professing believers attempt to read Christianity into popular movies that are thoroughly antichrist. It happened with *Star Wars*, the *Harry Potter* series, and too many others to list. It's a foregone conclusion that we will see much of the same for *Avatar*. *Christianity Today*, for example, often leads the way in anointing the world's popular delusions as Christian. In its supported blog site directed at women and titled *Her-meneutics* (ironically a play on the word that fosters accurate Bible interpretation), a female Princeton Seminary student writes the featured article, suggesting that the character of Grace (mentioned above) may have been "*Avatar's* Christian character," and then adds a qualification, "Well, Christian-ish anyway."

Christian-ish?! James Cameron would be appalled at the suggestion; I am angered. The only insertion of any thing "Christian" in the entire movie is the name of a floating mountain range ("Hallelujah") and the mention of the Lord's name, which is used as a curse word. That's also a paradox for a story set more than a thousand years from today, seemingly far removed from the religious content missionaries supposedly used to "spoil the purity" of the noble savages. Although Christianity has obviously died out in the movie's future setting, ironically its God remains in the psyche and on the foulmouthed lips of the characters in the movie.

*Christianity Today*, the Emerging Church Movement, Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. plan, and those among some mission and parachurch organizations (e.g., those that follow

the leadership and teachings of C. Peter Wagner) have a penchant for trying to find buried nuggets of Christ in the culture, or accommodating Christianity to the culture, and vice versa. Many are about sanctifying and redeeming the paganism of a society, or at least trying to harmonize and work with all religions. This is all fodder for syncretism and ecumenism. They are contributing to the religion of the Antichrist. A. W. Tozer took such an endeavor to task by noting that Moses did not enter into a panel discussion with the Israelites for finding some spiritual merits of the golden calf, nor did Elijah trade edifying insights with the prophets of Baal, and neither did Jesus seek a meeting of the minds with the Pharisees. Furthermore, promoting a "group hug" among contradictory religions with the intention of solving the world's problems is a grand delusion at best. Isaiah, speaking for Jehovah God, makes His view absolutely clear: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this [God's] word, it is because there is no light in them" (Is 8:20).

Warnings are also clear in the Word of God that a great spiritual battle is being waged all around us, that we are in the days of rampant apostasy in the church, and that we are being subjected to an increasing antichristianity in the world. What then must a believer do? We must diligently follow the Lord's prevention and protection program, the heart of which is found in Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." But certainly there's more: prayer and fellowship, for example. We need to circle the wagons at times--for spiritual protection, counsel, encouragement, and ministry to one another. If such things become our disciplined practice of life, though the Apostasy dries up the spiritual environment around us, we and our families nevertheless shall be fruitful in the Lord.

### **Sonic Bloom...? We're talking survival here!**

Now I know this is going to sound a little New Age wacko here but it's not. It's actually scientific! You may have heard of people talking to their plants to make them grow better right? Some play music for them to do the same. I always thought this was nuts. But now it's been scientifically proven that plants really do respond to certain sonic wave lengths. This really works great on fruits and vegetables. And get this... Up to 500% greater growth! Faster growth and bigger veggies! Imagine getting 10 to 20 times more tomatoes, zucchini, corn, radishes, potatoes, strawberries etc. There's various sounds that have been experimented with. Classical music, big band, birds chirping, the sound of an approaching thunderstorm, you name it! One I've read that works quite well is the combination of a babbling brook and birds chirping. Let me give you an example of what I did myself.

Last year I grew a garden. Because I like strawberries, I planted about 30 plants. Got two strawberries all year! Strawberries usually perform better the second season anyway but nothing like what I'm about to tell you. In the late Fall after everything pretty much died for the winter, I went out and salvaged one strawberry plant. It was quite dead (dormant). I placed it in a pot with the same soil I'd been using, brought it in and put it in the only southern facing window I have. I watered it and in October it started coming back to life. By December it looked really great and started budding little flowers. Picked

my first strawberry in the middle of January and have been eating them ever since! 25 so far and at last count, there's 28 more on the plant! That's one plant! This plant sits next to a radio fixed on one station. Easy listening. I've had years of growing strawberries but I've never had anything like this happen before! And surely never in the middle of Winter! Now, I've put together a CD of a babbling brook with birds chirping in the background which I plan to use this year. If you would like a copy, let me know and I'll get one to you.

### **40 Years of Mother Earth News Magazine...**

Some of you may have heard of *Mother Earth Magazine*. It started in 1970 and is full of practical articles. Everything from how to grow the best tomatoes for your area, to how to build a solar heater for \$15.00, to how to raise chickens in your back yard, to creating a sustainable society and much more! About 30 years ago, I read an article entitled: The House That Jack Built. It was about a guy in Canada whose house burned to the ground and he had no insurance. He had plenty of trees and would have built a log home but one man couldn't lift a heavy log. So he sat down on his pile of fire wood, (ironically the only thing that didn't burn) and got the idea of using cords of wood to rebuild. With logs about 18 inches long making up the walls, he wouldn't even need any insulation! I was fascinated! Now, 30 years later, I have a barn built the same way! Total cost? About \$40 for the mortar! I got the wood from the forest. In their latest magazine, I found a small ad saying, "40 Years for \$40.00" It's the complete Mother Earth News Archive on DVD-ROM or CD-ROM. Every story, tip & technique- nearly 8,500 articles plus additional content never in print. I sent off for it right away and I'm glad I did! You might want to do the same. Available through Mother Earth News at 1-800-678-4883, or online at [www.MotherEarthNews.com](http://www.MotherEarthNews.com).

### **How The Apostles and Early Church Leaders Died...**

Matthew: Suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, killed by a sword wound.

Mark: Died in Alexandria, Egypt, after being dragged by horses through the streets until he was dead.

Luke: Was hanged in Greece as a result of his tremendous preaching to the lost.

John: Faced martyrdom when he was boiled in huge basin of boiling oil during a wave of persecution in Rome. However, he was miraculously delivered from death. John was then sentenced to the mines on the prison island of Patmos. He wrote his prophetic Book of Revelation on Patmos. The apostle John was later freed and returned to serve as Bishop of Edessa in modern Turkey. He died as an old man, the only apostle to die peacefully.

Peter: He was crucified upside down on an x-shaped cross. According to church tradition it was because he told his tormentors that he felt unworthy to die in the same way that Jesus Christ had died.

James the Just (half-brother of Jesus): The leader of the church in Jerusalem, was thrown over a hundred feet down from the southeast pinnacle\* of the Temple when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. When they discovered that he survived the fall, his enemies beat James to death with a fuller's club.

\* This was the same pinnacle where Satan had taken Jesus during the Temptation.

James the Great (Son of Zebedee): was a fisherman by trade when Jesus called him to a lifetime of ministry. As a strong leader of the church, James was ultimately beheaded at Jerusalem. The Roman officer who guarded James watched amazed as James defended his faith at his trial. Later, the officer walked beside James to the place of execution. Overcome by conviction, he declared his new faith to the judge and knelt beside James to accept beheading as a Christian.

Bartholomew (also known as Nathaniel): Was a missionary to Asia. He witnessed for our Lord in present day Turkey.

Bartholomew was martyred for his preaching in Armenia where he was flayed to death by a whip.

Andrew: Was crucified on an x-shaped cross in Patras, Greece. After being whipped severely by seven soldiers they tied his body to the cross with cords to prolong his agony. His followers reported that, when he was led toward the cross, Andrew saluted it in these words: 'I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it.' He continued to preach to his tormentors for two days until he expired.

Thomas: Was stabbed with a spear in India during one of his missionary trips to establish the church in the sub-continent

Jude: Was killed with arrows when he refused to deny his faith in Christ.

Matthias: The apostle chosen to replace the traitor Judas Iscariot, was stoned and then beheaded.

Paul: Was tortured and then beheaded by the evil Emperor Nero at Rome in A.D. 67. Paul endured a lengthy imprisonment, which allowed him to write his many epistles to the churches he had formed throughout the Roman Empire. These letters, which taught many of the foundational doctrines of Christianity, form a large portion of the New Testament.

Are we prepared to do the same as these men?

### **Silver & Gold Have I None...**

Today, we are hearing more and more about the coming collapse and how we should invest in precious metals because they are the only things that will retain their worth. Yet many of us are "poo-poo"-ing the idea of doing that. Some are like me and just don't have the money to even think about preparing adequately in this way. Believe me, I would if I could! And other believers quote the Scripture from Ezekiel 7:19 about their gold and silver will not be able to save them. And this is true! But this is speaking to those that have entered into the tribulation period! Not for Christians that are living right now, Christians who have been informed of a coming financial crash within the next two years! Anything that has any real value comes from the dirt. God made it that way. Food, seeds for food, gold, precious stones, silver, everything! I highly suggest that if you can, get prepared with these kind of things now while there's still time. But the more you wait, the more expensive they will be. In January of 2009 an ounce of silver was about \$9.00. One year later it was over \$18.00! If you are one of those who are fortunate enough to do this, then do it! And if you have some left over, you can send it this way and set up treasures in heaven as well! For this ministry can surely use it at this time. If you have questions as to the best places to obtain precious metals, I have some leads for the best places to go. Feel free to contact me.

### **The Atheism Debate...**

April 1<sup>st</sup> has two recognized holidays, April Fool's Day and National Atheist Day. Yes, it's even on a few calendars! As I do every year at the first of April, I'm airing "The Atheism Debate" with a Christian (Ray Comfort) vs. the atheist (Ron Barrier) A very interesting debate! Comfort vs. Barrier! If you'd like a copy on DVD, it's available this month for a gift of any amount. Simply request: **The Atheism Debate**.

### **30 Club...**

Maybe you're unable to catch the broadcast but would still like to keep up with what's going on.

Here's a great way to do that. We have what's called our 30 Club. Anyone wishing to help support this ministry with a monthly gift of \$30.00 or more each month, may upon request, start receiving everything I air throughout the entire month. Sometimes these are on a CD but most of the time these are DVDS. Normally, DVDS cost \$20.00 each and CDS are \$5.00 each so this is not only a great deal, but it also helps support this ministry. So just let me know when you write if you'd like to become a part of the 30 Club. Thanks!

### **Ending Note...**

**Survival Ideas?** Here's a way you might be able to help others. Send me anything you can find on CDS/ DVDS or written that could help others during times of a financial crash, the power grid being taken out; you know, solar and wind energy, growing and storage of food & seeds, family safety, martial law, medicines, etc. Then I could share these with others! Perhaps air some things too! You can search the internet for things. The Lord might use you to help many! Now don't go thinking someone else will do this because they're thinking the same thing you are!

**Thank you again** to all those who help keep this ministry going through your prayers and gifts of support! Both are greatly needed at this time!

If you need to call me, my number is at the top of this newsletter.

Yours because His:



— Jim Zilonka

